

Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheet of drawings includes a change to FIG. 3b. This sheet, which includes FIG. 3b, replaces the original sheet including FIG. 3b. In FIG. 3b, reference number 324 has been changed to 334.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3 and 5 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-3 and 5 were amended, and claims 4 and 6-15 were canceled. No claims were added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner indicated that references identified in the specification were not considered because they were not cited on form PTO-892.

In Response, an Information Disclosure Statement citing the references is submitted herewith. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider the references and acknowledge such consideration in the next Office communication.

II. Objections to the Drawings

The Examiner has objected to Fig. 3b of the drawings because reference number 324 should be “334.”

A corrected drawing sheet including Fig. 3b is attached hereto.

The Examiner has also objected to the drawings because Fig. 3b includes reference character 345 not mentioned in the specification, and because reference numbers 303, 305, 307, 334 and 346 mentioned in the specification are not shown in the drawings

In response, the specification and drawings have been amended to correct these informalities and to ensure proper correspondence between the specification and drawings.

Therefore, the objections to the drawings have been overcome. The Examiner is thanked for bringing these inadvertent errors to Applicants’ attention.

III. Objection to the Specification

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract as failing to be clear and concise. By the present Amendment, the Abstract has been amended to avoid use of implied phrases and to be in proper form throughout.

In addition, embedded hyperlinks on pages 2 and 3 have been deleted as requested by the Examiner, and page 11 lines 8-12 has been amended to properly describe block 306 in FIG. 3a.

Therefore, the objections to the specification have been overcome.

IV. 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph Rejection and Claim Objection

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, which applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 1-3 and 5 have each been carefully amended to correct the indefinite language noted by the Examiner, and to generally recite the invention in a clear and definite manner. Claims 1-3 and 5 as presented herein fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, in all respects.

Therefore the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, has been overcome.

V. Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 13 and 14 because of informalities.

By the present Amendment, claims 13 and 14 have been canceled. Therefore, the objection to those claims is now moot.

VI. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 and 8-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reps et al. (US Patent No. 6,070,190) in view of Lopke et al. (US Published Patent Application No. 2002/0169868). In addition, the Examiner has rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reps et al. in view of Lopke et al., and further in view of Davis et al. (US Patent No. 6,138,155).

By the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter originally recited in claim 4 and indicated as being allowable, and claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form and to include the subject matter originally recited in claims 6 and 7, indicated as being allowable, in alternative form. Claims 4 and 6-20 have been canceled.

Therefore, the rejection of claims 1-3 and 8-15 as being unpatentable over Reps et al. in view of Lopke et al., and the rejection of claim 5 as being unpatentable over Reps et al in view of, Lopke et al. and Davis et al. have been overcome.

VII. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 4, 6 and 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 4, and claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form to incorporate the subject matter of claims 6 and 7

in an alternative form. Therefore, claims 1 and 5 as well as claims 2 and 3 which depend from claim 1 should now be allowed.

VIII. Conclusion

This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the Examiner so find and issue a Notice of Allowance in due course.

Applicants have amended claims 1-3 and 5 and canceled claims 4 and 6-15 from further consideration in this application. Applicants are not conceding in this application that those claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuation and/or divisional patent applications.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: December 19, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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